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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with the President of Russia (S)

PARTICIPANTS: President Putin

Interpreter: Peter Afanasenko

Notetakers: Michael Eaton, Laura Wittig,
James Cooney

DATE, TIME: October 2, 2006, 7:39 - 7:56 a.m. EDT

AND PLACE: Oval Office

The President: Hey Vladimir. How are you? (U)

President Putin: George, I am glad to hear you. I am welcoming you from the Ural Mountains, a place we have here in Russia. (U)

The President: Fantastic. I am sorry I didn't talk to you sooner. I have been busy with campaigns, but I thought it important to stay in touch with you. (U)

President Putin: I am listening. (U)

The President: Good. I guess the first subject I am interested in is the World Trade Organization. I have been monitoring the discussions and it looks like we are making very good progress, and evidently we are waiting on the veterinarian's reports. I don't know if you see it that way or not. (S)

President Putin: I have not received any reports lately, and therefore, I cannot say exactly what is going on. The most recent information I have received is that the progress has not been significant. Progress has been minor, but as soon as I get back to Moscow, I will see what is going on. (S)

The President: That would be good. I am following this and want to get something done. (S)

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President Putin: Maybe I have missed out on one or two items. In the past two weeks, I have not gotten into this affair. (S)

The President: Secondly, Iran. My concern is that the Iranians are stalling for time so they can enrich. I appreciate our cooperation on this issue, and cooperation with Russia on this will be important as we go forward. We need to send a strong message that Iran should not have the capacity or wherewithal to build a nuclear weapon. Condi is going to meet with Lavrov and her other counterparts later this week, and hopefully we can reach a consensus on how to send a clear message to the Iranians. (S)

President Putin: Okay. (U)

The President: The other thing is that I talked with Nazarbayev. It is very important that Kazakhstan can be friends with Russia and the United States at the same time, and not have to choose between the two of us. (S)

President Putin: I fully agree. (U)

The President: Finally, this phone call was set up before the recent crisis in Georgia, and I want to communicate my concerns about that situation and ask for your advice, and to ask you to calm the situation down. One of the main reasons I called was to hear your voice and chat with you. In Vietnam, I hope I can see you on the edges of APEC. My intention was not to inconvenience you, and I hope I didn't disturb your vacation in the Urals. (S)

President Putin: Thank you very much for this call. I am very glad to hear you. First of all, about Iran, we are also concerned with the situation around Iran's nuclear program. It is true that our positions are close and need to remain close. I met with Chirac and Merkel on the 23rd in Paris, and we discussed this issue with them. On the whole, we reached a common understanding about how we should advance on this issue. We believe any measures should be taken stage by stage and in proportion to the actions of Iran itself. The measures should be commensurate with the measures the U.N. Security Council would find appropriate to push Iran towards this or that action. Of course, the main criterion for us is moving towards non-proliferation. Of course, we should take into account our own interests. It would be difficult for us to accept any decision that would be unilateral and against our interests. I would like to point out other circumstances. For example, recently the State Department adopted a position with regard to sanctions against two of our companies and said these two companies have been working with Iran. Condi is aware of these issues. I want to tell you that those two companies have nothing to do with Iran

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on non-proliferation issues. Recently, Solana had a meeting with Larijani and my colleagues have spoken to both of them. Both Larijani and Solana have announced that they have a certain optimism. I am not sure if it's true, or the reasons for the optimism, but this is what Solana said. The Iranians have asked Igor Ivanov to come to Tehran. It would be a good idea to find out what is going on there. Today, or tomorrow he will be there, and we will brief you in detail on the results of that visit.

(U)

The President: That would be good. (U)

President Putin: Now, about Georgia, we do not understand why Mr. Saakashvili is inflaming the situation and creating hysteria. He is violating all arrangements that have been agreed upon that would have opened ways for him towards a peaceful settlement. We noticed that this is all happening right after his return from the United States. It is quite regretful that the perception here is that over there, he received a *carte blanche* to pursue his aggressive policies. This is especially the case since support of Georgia continues to take place, certainly in the framework of NATO and this is certainly stimulating inappropriate behavior. You have asked what can be done? It is obvious that gestures of support should be ruled out, and we have been quite disappointed with the position of the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Security Council, who has declined to agree with the presidential statement on Georgia. We expect your administration to take a principled position on the settlement of conflicts in the post-Soviet era. With respect to Nazarbayev, I will see him tomorrow within the framework of the meeting of governors from the neighboring states. Judging by your joint statement and the press conference, I see you had a successful meeting and I congratulate you. Also, on behalf of Ludmila, I want to thank Laura for the invitation to visit New York. Ludmila participated in the conference that was organized by Laura supporting the dissemination of literacy. In my view, New York City is such a huge and busy conglomerate, it is unlivable for human beings. Ludmila said she liked it a lot, and we had an argument about it yesterday. I believe that this is due to the warm hospitality afforded to her by Laura. I hope to see you in Hanoi. (S)

The President: What are you doing in the Urals? (U)

President Putin: I am on a working visit in the area. (U)

The President: I thought you might be hunting. (U)

President Putin: No, no. Unfortunately not hunting. We are discussing health care issues. (U)

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The President: I hope everything is well with you, and I look forward to seeing you in a month. (U)

President Putin: I am absolutely fine, and I look forward to seeing you. Thank you for this call. (U)

The President: Bye, Vladimir. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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